

The Coachella Valley Economic Blueprint

THE ROAD AHEAD

2009 AND BEYOND



cvepblueprint.com

It is a changed world.

The global economic crisis has created serious stresses here in the valley. Financial challenges and high unemployment rates mean that if we are to thrive in the new economy, we must think differently. We have a unique opportunity during this time to plan for our new economy that must evolve from the current downturn.

For the Coachella Valley, the challenge means we must accelerate our region's evolution from a seasonal economy to one that thrives year-round, with quality employment opportunities for full-time residents of all ages and skill-levels.

This year, with support from the Desert Lyceum, the Coachella Valley Economic Partnership (CVEP) decided to take decisive action. CVEP contracted with nationally prominent economic development consulting firm Market Street Services to develop a comprehensive economic development strategic plan for the region. A steering committee of community leaders was formed, and the result of months of hard work is the Coachella Valley Economic Blueprint – the roadmap for our future.

The Blueprint is a strategy for the entire Coachella Valley. It is ambitious, comprehensive and forward thinking. The Blueprint is a regionally focused, market-based, detailed strategy with a five year business plan. The Blueprint demonstrates leadership, and will advance the Coachella Valley through the current downturn and position us for long term growth.


This transition will not happen overnight, nor will it be without pitfalls, but the Valley's leadership is committed to create a new economy that benefits every member of our community.

Finally, we want to recognize the leadership of our fellow co-chair and dear friend the late Roy Wilson. His thoughtful leadership throughout this process even today inspires us to succeed with the implementation of this Blueprint.

Please join us in supporting this critical effort to create our future.



Rich Ramhoff
The Desert Sun
Co-Chair



Richard Oliphant
Oliphant Enterprises
Co-Chair





Project Overview

FUNDING SUPPORT FOR THE BLUEPRINT WAS PROVIDED BY THE CITIES OF CATHEDRAL CITY, COACHELLA, DESERT HOT SPRINGS, INDIAN WELLS, INDIO, LA QUINTA, PALM DESERT, PALM SPRINGS, AND RANCHO MIRAGE, RIVERSIDE COUNTY, THE IMPERIAL IRRIGATION DISTRICT, UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, RIVERSIDE - PALM DESERT GRADUATE CENTER, THE PALM SPRINGS DESERT RESORTS CONVENTION AND VISITORS AUTHORITY, AND THE BUILDING INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION.

Members of the Desert Lyceum and CVEP's Executive Committee assembled a regional and representative sampling of area private, public and civic stakeholders to serve as the Blueprint Steering Committee, which was tasked with overseeing the Blueprint development.

The Executive Committee and the Steering Committee asked hundreds of individual and organizational stakeholders to be involved in focus groups, surveys, and consultation over the course of a six-month process to develop draft strategies.

pursue. Many times, communities lack focus or attempt to capture opportunities that do not fit their assets and reality. This analysis provided specific information and a needs assessment on future sectors for the Valley to pursue.

THE COMPONENTS OF THIS PROCESS WERE:

A Competitive Assessment: This report included an analysis of a combination of factors that determines a community's competitiveness as a place of business for entrepreneurship, existing, expanding, and relocating companies. The key findings and recommendations of these reports helped inform the development of the Coachella Valley's Blueprint. Original research into the latest economic structural dynamics in Coachella Valley was complemented by an understanding of the trends affecting the local population.

A Target Business Analysis: The analysis included quantitative and qualitative research to determine the most promising business sectors for Coachella Valley to

A Marketing Assessment: The assessment included a thorough review and assessment of local marketing efforts to determine if they reflect best-practice methods for increasing awareness and investment in the Coachella Valley.

Best-Practices Analysis: This report identified a number of communities similar to the Coachella Valley and how they've achieved success. While there was no attempt to directly copy these programs, there were lessons that were applied to the development of the Valley's Blueprint.

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The Committee was selected from both public and private sectors to provide broad representation from local constituencies. The group's oversight ensured that the development of research reports and the Blueprint itself was reflective of the Coachella Valley's true competitive issues and opportunities.

The Committee served a critical role in the development of the strategy and, as such, were relied on throughout the process to insure the constituencies it represents are on board with key findings and strategic recommendations.



Economic Blueprint Strategy: The four preceding research components led to the development of the Economic Blueprint strategy itself. The plan confirms and enhances existing programs and efforts and provides recommendations for developing the capacity necessary to be competitive in today's economy.

Implementation Plan: The final and perhaps most important step in this process involves centering on "how" the strategy will be put into practice. Included is a specific "game plan" created to address each goal in the strategy. Benchmarks and measures have been assigned and a five-year priority Action Plan has been recommended. The Implementation Plan enables local stakeholders to successfully activate the Blueprint's recommendations.

KEY CHALLENGES IDENTIFIED DURING THE PROCESS:

- Employment growth and decline strongly tied to state and national expansions and recessions;
- High business sector concentrations in lower-paying employment such as retail, hospitality, agriculture, and entertainment;
- Lower comparative wages and incomes than other regions;
- Lower educational attainment, higher poverty percentages, and higher property crime rates;
- A more diverse and lower-income K-12 student population that requires additional resources to effectively prepare for college and careers;
- A workforce that many say needs additional training upon graduation from high school and lacks in certain soft skills;
- A comparatively older population of retirees and elderly residents;
- A relative lack of high-value employment opportunities that could better recruit and retain young professionals and "trailing" spouses of top executives; and
- A business climate that lacks competitive economic development marketing, recruitment, retention, and regulatory activities.

KEY OPPORTUNITIES IN THE COACHELLA VALLEY IDENTIFIED DURING THE PROCESS:

- An entrepreneurial population that is adept at starting and growing businesses;
- A potential labor force of semi-retired and retired individuals who might still have desires to work, start businesses or advise fledgling entrepreneurs;
- A truly dynamic and attractive quality of life that draws new residents and businesses to the Valley and serves as an incentive for existing residents to remain the region;
- Local school systems working diligently to raise student performance and preparedness;
- A higher-education capacity featuring a well-established two-year college and two four-year campuses with strong growth potential;
- A diverse population and workforce that adds to the Valley's dynamism as a place to live, work and visit; and
- The potential of a region that chooses to unite behind progressive and transformative processes for change.

Blueprint Goals and Strategy

The Blueprint strategy focuses on four primary goal areas. These are:

- **REGIONALISM**
- **ECONOMIC DIVERSIFICATION**
- **WORKFORCE EXCELLENCE**
- **QUALITY OF PLACE**

The four goals are interrelated and must be approached systematically. Failure to achieve results in one goal area significantly threatens the prospects of the others. Economic development has never been more competitive than it is today, so key opportunities identified during the process will need to be leveraged to overcome these challenges.

GOAL ONE: REGIONALISM

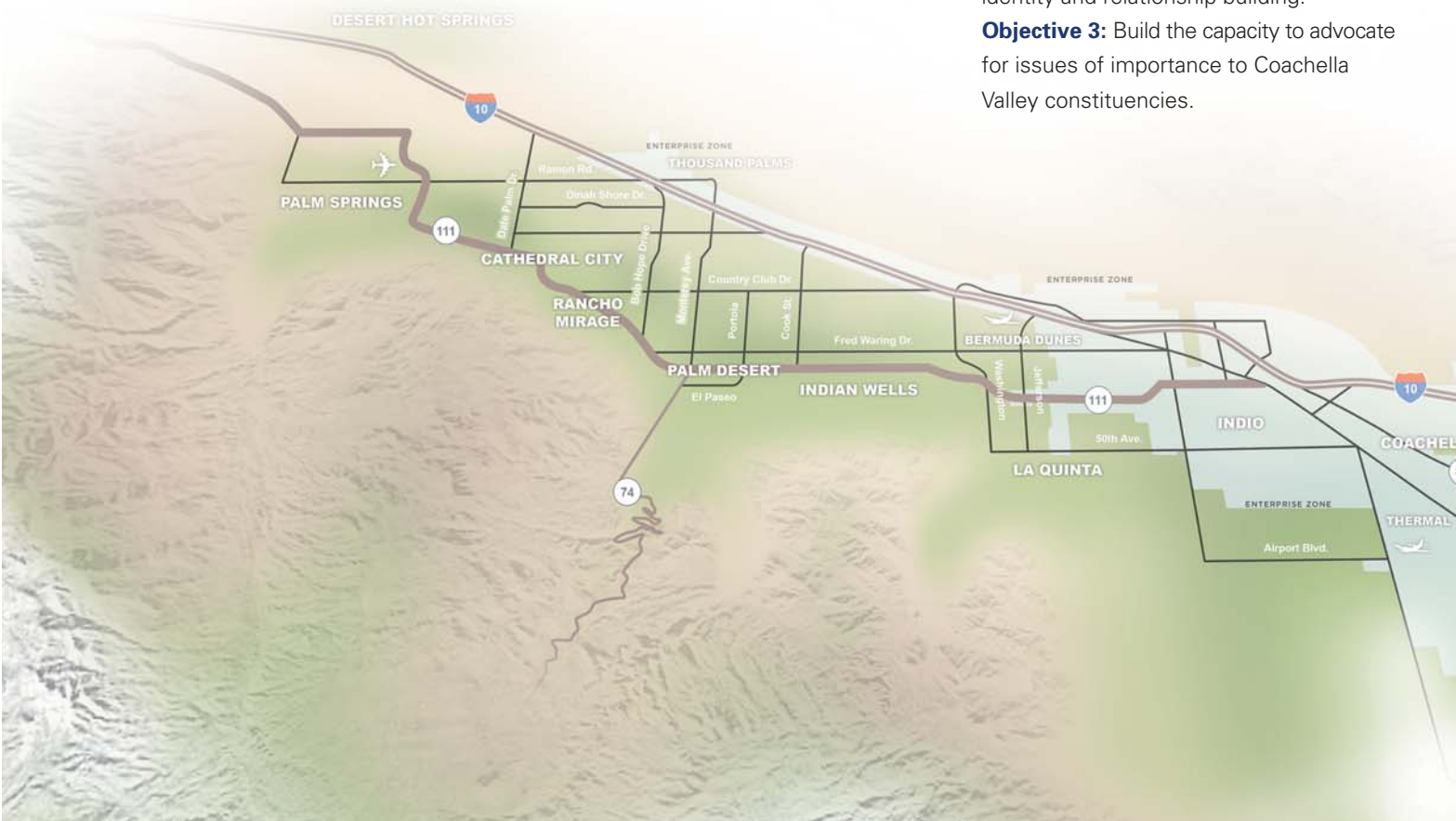
In many ways, the Coachella Valley is a region in name only. There has yet to develop a true sense among Valley communities that they are a component of a larger economic and demographic whole and have responsibilities related to that role. This goal will address the need for an organization to serve an active role to foster regionalism in the Valley.

Objective 1: Promote greater understanding of regional challenges and opportunities.

Objective 2: Better link Coachella Valley communities through programs that foster identity and relationship building.

Objective 3: Build the capacity to advocate for issues of importance to Coachella Valley constituencies.

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GOAL TWO: ECONOMIC DIVERSIFICATION

The Coachella Valley has high concentrations in cyclical, largely low paying employment sectors that risk continued instability. Greater diversification is needed and can be attained through the development of high wage sectors that will boost regional wealth and increase economic sustainability. This goal will focus on programs and policies to make the Coachella Valley competitive for jobs and investment.

Objective 1: Develop comprehensive internal and external economic development marketing programs for the Coachella Valley.

Objective 2: Effectively develop the Coachella Valley's identified target sectors:

- Healthcare and Life Sciences
- Supply Chain Management / Logistics
- Clean Technology and Energy
- Creative Arts and Design

Objective 3: Provide comprehensive data collection and analysis services for regional stakeholder groups.

Objective 4: Provide entrepreneurs and small business persons the resources necessary to succeed.

Objective 5: Ensure existing Coachella Valley businesses are retained and expanded.

GOAL THREE: WORKFORCE EXCELLENCE

The quality and capacity of a community's workforce is its number one competitive concern. This goal will address issues related to the Valley's school districts and local training institutions – including colleges, universities and workforce centers.

Objective 1: Optimize primary and secondary education in the Valley.

Objective 2: Fully leverage regional higher education and workforce development institutions.

GOAL FOUR: QUALITY OF PLACE

The Coachella Valley's arts and culture amenities, destination attractions and developments, recreational resources, and diversity of retail and restaurant choices have long been seen as the region's key assets. Ensuring that the Valley continues to maintain and develop quality of life and quality of place amenities will be a key component of the Economic Blueprint.

Objective 1: Leverage local and regional partnerships to provide effective public services for Coachella Valley residents.

Objective 2: Continue to enhance the Coachella Valley's capacity in arts culture and recreation amenities.

Objective 3: Support the development of quality housing options for residents of all ages and incomes.

Objective 4: Ensure that sustainable development patterns are supported and enforced.



Target Business Sectors

THE STRATEGIC ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PRACTICE OF TARGETING IDENTIFIED BUSINESS SECTOR OPPORTUNITIES BEGAN WITH THE RECOGNITION THAT BUSINESSES CAN DEVELOP INTO INTERCONNECTED GROUPS (SOMETIMES CALLED “CLUSTERS”) OF RELATED SECTORS. THESE GROUPINGS OF BUSINESSES SHARE LABOR POOLS, RESOURCES, AND OTHER CHARACTERISTICS THAT PLAY TO THEIR RESPECTIVE STRENGTHS. A TARGETING STRATEGY REQUIRES A THREE-PRONGED APPROACH OF: 1) SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT; 2) EXISTING BUSINESS EXPANSION; AND 3) RECRUITMENT OF LIKE OR RELATED FIRMS.

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The connections among businesses develop over time because the local economy offers the infrastructure, geography, workforce, and other related factors that provide a competitive advantage. When an agglomeration of like businesses occurs, it can create ever-expanding economies of scale for business activities within that field. Additionally, proximity to similar firms allows businesses to learn about best practices and new technologies, partner with other businesses and area educational institutions to create a well-trained labor pool, and reduce business transportation costs.

Most groupings of business sectors grow out of a large and/or dominant company, or result from the interaction among a few growing companies. Such groupings usually occur if the original firms have the level of success required to create an environment that allows related companies to thrive and generate additional demand. Another effective means of developing growth within a specific business sector is to form and leverage connections with university and government research labs and other institutions.

Another important concept in local economic development is the traded, or export sector. A traded sector is a community's economic engine – that part of the economy that sells goods and services to customers outside the region, importing income that then circulates throughout the rest of the local economy. The new money entering the economy is then used to purchase local goods and services, creating new wealth within the community. Conversely, other sectors are non-traded because purchases are generally made within the community rather than bringing in dollars from outside of the area. Local economic developers should always strive to recruit and develop traded industries because these sectors have a greater benefit to overall community vitality.

Because of limited economic development resources, it makes sense for a community or region to focus its economic development efforts in areas that have the greatest potential for diversification,

job growth and wealth creation. The most efficient and successful targeting efforts are those that focus on existing or emerging groups of similar firms in a local or regional economy. These existing and emerging groups occur based on a community's economic strengths and competitive advantages, so a proactive, intentional focus on firms in these or related groupings is the most effective means of achieving both short and long-term growth. However, sustainable economic health can only be achieved if the target efforts result in firms that are diverse in size and types of products and services.

Successful, economically sustainable pursuit of targets cannot occur via traditional recruitment activities alone. Entrepreneurship and small business development, and existing business retention and expansion should also be priorities of local economic development work.

THE SELECTION OF THE COACHELLA VALLEY'S TARGET BUSINESS SECTORS INCORPORATED A NUMBER OF FACTORS. IMPORTANTLY, THE IDENTIFICATION OF TARGETS ALSO ASSESSED THE HIGHEST VALUE-ADDED BENEFIT RELATED TO PRIORITIZED INVESTMENTS IN TARGET DEVELOPMENT. AS SUCH, TWO KEY LOCAL BUSINESS CATEGORIES WERE DETERMINED TO BE VITAL TO THE LOCAL ECONOMY — HOSPITALITY & TOURISM AND AGRICULTURE — BUT NOT AT THE LEVEL OF A TARGETED OPPORTUNITY.



THE TARGETED SEGMENTS

• Healthcare & Life Science

This sector is broadly defined and extends far beyond health care providers to include biotechnology, scientific research and testing activities, and the manufacture of medical products and devices, and medicine/pharmaceutical products. The health care sector offers job opportunities for workers with varying educational backgrounds and skill levels. However, most jobs in health care do require some degree of specific training. As the demand for medical care increases, health care institutions will need increased personnel in patient care as well as in support occupations such as accounting, information technology, administrative support, and human resources. Additionally, more widespread opportunities will be created for health technologists (i.e. clinical laboratory technologists, EKG technologists, etc.); health technicians (i.e. emergency medical technicians, dispensing opticians, etc.); and pharmacy and therapy occupations (i.e. nutritionists, physical therapists, pharmacists, etc.).

• Clean Technology/Energy

The state of California has advanced its sustainable energy markets by incentivizing the development of homes powered by solar energy, creating a program to stimulate market demand for renewable energy systems, and providing customer rebates for using solar and wind energy and making overall energy-efficiency improvements. The Coachella Valley has set goals to make

the region greener and made deliberate efforts to reach those goals. Existing renewable energy sources like wind and geothermal power provide the Valley with a leg up over many communities looking to gain a foothold in the clean technology/energy sector.

• Supply Chain Management/Logistics

Advances in technology have spawned new ways of doing business and reduced the virtual distance between people, even when the physical distance is great. Such technologies have not only created a demand for advanced logistical services, but have also redefined the logistics sector itself. No longer is logistics merely the transport of a product from one point to another by various modes of transportation; the sector has grown increasingly focused on supply-chain management. This includes technology services that manage and optimize the entire process from the point when an order is entered, to the time the customer receives it. Due to revolutionary technological advances, logistics support activities now include scheduling, fleet management, network optimization, and other supply-chain management-related processes.

• Creative Arts, Media & Design

Recognizing that the Creative Arts, Media and Design sector attracts high earning design and media professionals to the area, more marketing attention must be applied to this sector to develop these

professions into a greater concentration of design and media businesses growing to support new firms with more employees in these fields.

Among one of the most promising fields is film and TV production for independent feature films, TV movies and shows, TV commercials and infomercials. Media and Design professionals from LA, San Diego and other large markets must be exposed to the film-friendly resources in the Coachella Valley, including the physical environment and the growing cadre of film, TV, media and design professionals in the Valley. In this way, the Creative Arts, Media & Design sector can become an increasingly important generator of high value professional opportunities in a field where the results of their activities are viewed by millions of people throughout the US and the world. Spreading the word and visual images of the best of the Coachella Valley while producing the material locally will add value to all regional industry efforts.

Attracting LA-based film students from the top film schools, for example, to produce their student thesis films in the Coachella Valley will expose the resources of the Valley to the next generation of filmmakers, TV producers and digital arts producers and invite them to consider the Valley as a wonderful nearby resource for their productions in the future.

Benchmarks, Budget Estimates, Organization

BENCHMARKS

The key benchmarks for the first year are:

1. Creation of repositioned and repurposed, and regional economic development organization.
2. Creation of Action Committees/Work Groups to oversee specific Blueprint strategies.
3. Hiring of a dynamic, accomplished and well respected CEO.
4. Launching of internal marketing efforts to build awareness of CVEP and its mission and help change perceptions of the Valley as an economic entity and the importance of partnering for effective development.
5. Development and dissemination of a new logo, messaging campaign and website for CVEP.
6. Development of and launch of a small-business incubator.
7. Creation of a local and external “clean and green” marketing program.
8. Implementation of a program coordinated by CVEP to partner business community volunteers with families of graduating students to help them access financial aid for college.
9. Development of capacity at CVEP to provide Valley cities and governments with robust data retrieval, assembly, analysis and dissemination services – and placement of these data on CVEP’s website.

PROJECTED BUDGET

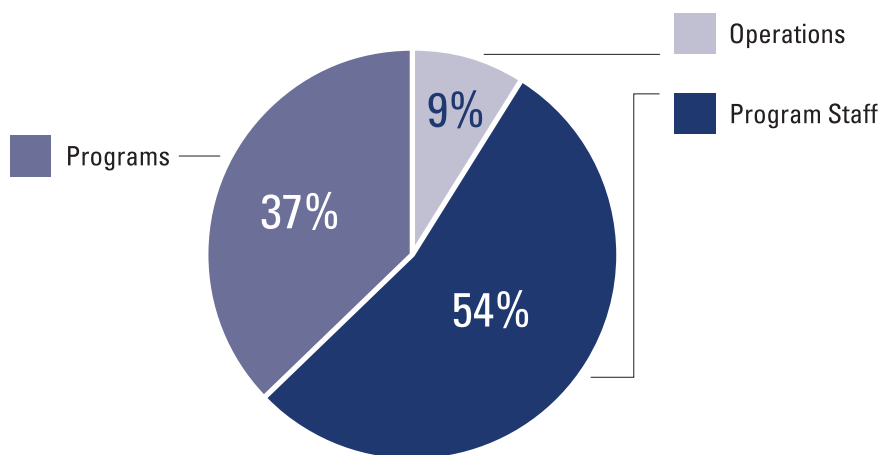
Market Street has recommended a budget range based on the recommended implementation and benchmark schedule. The first year action plan recognizes the need to build capacity and achieve some early victories. Specific policy priorities that will drive the final budget will be set by the Board of Directors.

The projected budget for the first year is estimated at \$1.1 million. Current support for ongoing grant funded educational programs is not included in the first year budget but will be incorporated in future

consolidated budgets for the organization and implementation of the Blueprint. At full capacity in the fifth year, and incorporating ongoing programs, the organization will have an estimated annual budget of \$2.1 million.

These budget recommendations are very much in line with the programmatic capacity of competitor regions. Investment at this level will ensure that the Coachella Valley has the personnel and programmatic capacity to “get in the game” of *regional* economic development.

PROJECTED FIVE-YEAR OPERATING BUDGET





SOURCES

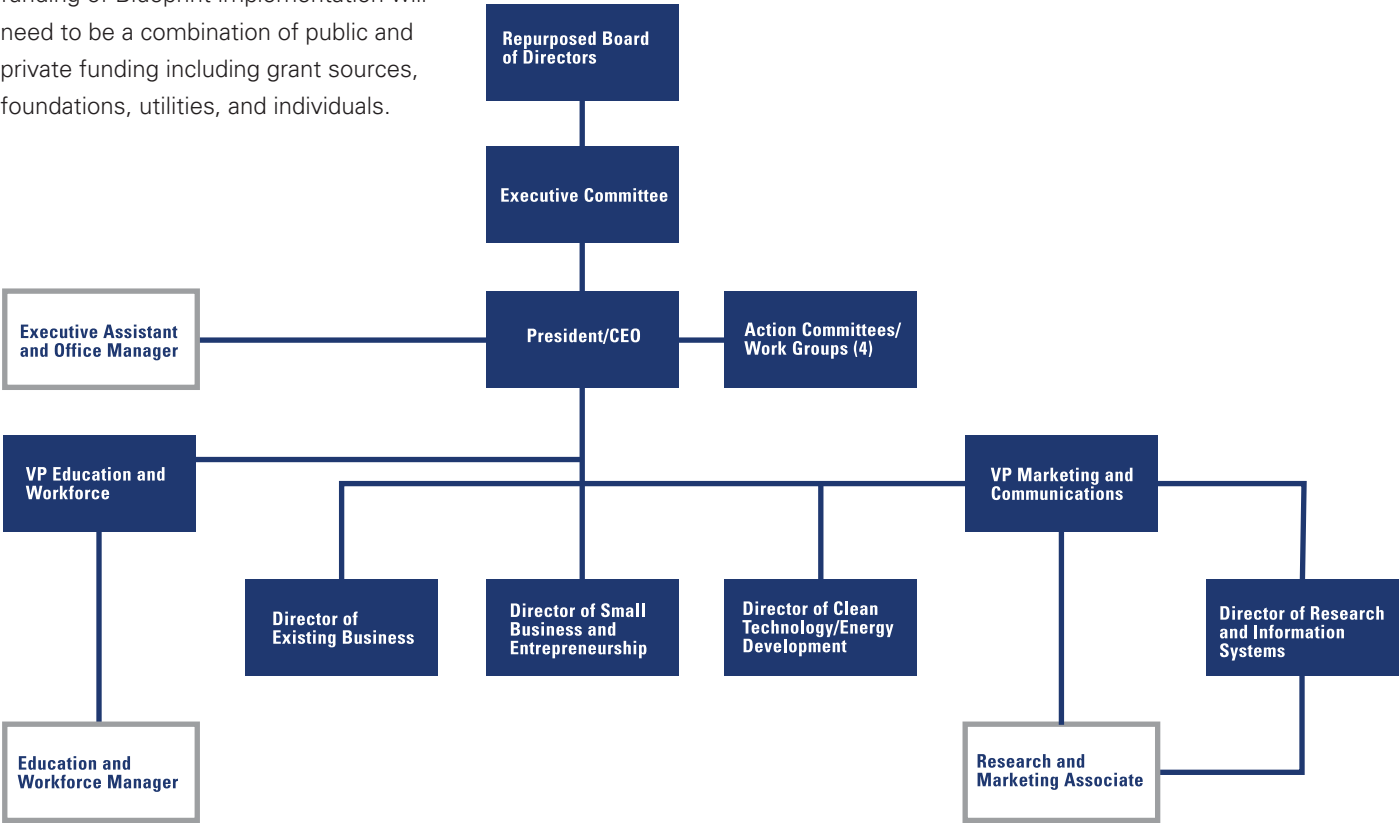
This strategy represents a giant step forward in building the civic capacity of the Coachella Valley. It cannot be funded from current organizational budgets, nor is it reasonable for the regional organization’s operations and staff to take over implementation of all community and economic development programming. This effort will need to be marketed as a new undertaking dedicated solely to the implementation of the Blueprint strategy. Ultimately, the funding of Blueprint implementation will need to be a combination of public and private funding including grant sources, foundations, utilities, and individuals.

STRUCTURE

One proposed structure is provided. The final structure will be determined by the board and take final shape in the coming months as the new regional economic development organization (CVEP) transitions its structure and capacity to implement the Blueprint strategy.

STAFF

The management of the corporation will be in the hands of a Chief Executive Officer supported by a diverse staff of professionals overseeing programs in existing business retention and expansion, marketing, small business development and entrepreneurship, education and workforce development, research and information services, and sector-specific programs.



Economic Impact and ROI

Market Street has calculated projected performance gains for numerous indicators in the Coachella Valley based on effective Blueprint implementation. Market Street also had to project performance data for the years after latest data were available up to the year that official Blueprint tracking will begin. This “first tracking year” was set for 2012 to enable the implementing organization to be fully staffed with adequate capacity.

Based on our projections for successful implementation, the Coachella Valley stands to gain a total of 16,255 net new jobs and over \$2.3 billion in net new wages during the 2012-2016 measured Blueprint implementation cycle.

Performance metrics also project notable improvement in areas such as educational attainment, poverty reduction, graduation rates, and others.

Further, Market Street calculated a base multiplier for the Coachella Valley economy to determine the number of additional non-basic (induced/indirect) jobs that would be generated by every new basic job (a product or service that brings “outside” money into the region). The Coachella Valley’s base multiplier is 1.7. So, in other words, for every 1000 “basic” jobs created in the region, 700 additional

“non-basic” jobs will be generated by the multiplier effect of this new money filtering through the regional economy.

The effective implementation of a comprehensive community and economic development strategy like the Blueprint holds wide-ranging benefits for the Coachella Valley. A growing economy with good paying jobs raises total regional incomes and provides additional capital for consumer spending, business investment and the funding of arts, culture and recreation amenities. Rising tax receipts strengthen governments’ ability to provide enhanced services to local residents. Effectively linking the private sector with training providers creates workforce “pipelines” for in-demand occupations and exposes regional students to dynamic employment opportunities in the Valley. This, in turn, increases the likelihood they will be more engaged in their studies, graduate from high school and pursue college degrees.

A better educated, higher income population would likely lead to declining poverty, teenage pregnancy and crime rates. Balancing regional growth with environmental protection, smart land-use and effective planning of transportation, water and communications infrastructure ensures that the Valley’s future is sustainable.



Target Sector	Total Sector Employment		Average Wage	Net Increase, Blueprint Implementation Period	
	2012 Projection	2016 Projection		Net Sector Job Growth	Net Sector Growth (2007 \$)
Healthcare and Life Sciences	12,380	15,615	\$52,947	3,235	\$171,288,238
Clean Technology/Energy	1,481	3,156	\$69,683	1,675	\$116,705,346
Supply Chain Management/Logistics	2,491	3,466	\$42,575	975	\$41,524,901
Creative Arts and Design	5,337	8,391	\$51,158	3,054	\$156,234,740
Total Increase, Five-Year Blueprint Cycle:				8,939	\$485,753,225

...we truly believe that the overall community benefits beyond simple job creation — improved educational performance, declining poverty and crime, more art galleries, parks and museums, healthier children and adults, etc. — make for an extremely compelling case for the benefits of Blueprint investment.

Market Street Services

The Steering Committee

CHAIRS

Roy Wilson, Riverside County Supervisor, District #4
Richard Oliphant, Oliphant Enterprises
Rich Ramhoff, The Desert Sun

STEERING COMMITTEE

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Rick Daniels, City of Desert Hot Springs
Tom Davis, Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians
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Join Us

THE COACHELLA VALLEY HAS COME TOGETHER TO SHAPE A COMPREHENSIVE REGIONAL STRATEGY THAT WILL DEFINE ITS FUTURE SUCCESS. THE BLUEPRINT PLAN IS AN AMBITIOUS, COMPREHENSIVE AND FORWARD-THINKING STRATEGY THAT ADDRESSES THE CHALLENGES THE VALLEY FACES TO BE COMPETITIVE AND THE OPPORTUNITIES TO BETTER DIVERSIFY ITS ECONOMY, RAISE LOCAL WEALTH, TRAIN YOUTH AND ADULTS FOR HIGH-WAGE CAREERS AND CONTINUE TO ENHANCE THE REGION'S ENVIABLE QUALITY OF LIFE.

Moving forward with the Blueprint will require that Valley communities and leadership think differently about what constitutes community and economic development and regional cooperation/participation. While its history has been focused on local growth – predominantly in residential, retail and hospitality development – the Valley's future must be increasingly directed towards regional solutions.

Both internal and external pursuit of employment growth will be defined by a more unified and collective approach to growth. The Valley must strive to speak with one voice to best advance its economic development prospects. It will not be simple to incorporate a more regional focus to the Coachella Valley's community and economic development activities, nor will it happen overnight, but failing to do so will threaten the Valley's evolution to a more diverse, year-round economy.

Ultimately, it is the responsibility of the Valley's public and private leadership to come together in new and positive ways to ensure that the region's promise is fulfilled. Economic development has never been more competitive than it is

today. If the Coachella Valley does not succeed, another community will.

Because the Valley is starting late in the regional community and economic development game, it has further to go to be competitive with communities that have been thinking and acting regionally for years – some, even decades. Competitor regions have been planning strategically for years, with some organizations on their second, third, or fourth or more cycles of strategic fundraising and implementation. Because of this, the Valley must acknowledge that tremendous resources will be needed to initiate regional programs and enable them to gain traction.

That said, the Coachella Valley is not starting from scratch in terms of its economic development and community capacity. Valley cities have been engaged in economic development programs for many years while a strong array of organizations work to improve the area's planning, environmental-resource protection, arts and culture capacity, social-services assistance, public safety, recreational options, etc. The challenge is that few of these activities have had a true regional focus, but the Coachella Valley has an ace up its sleeve that puts it

ahead of many regions trying to reinvent themselves in the New Economy. The Valley is a place people – and companies – want to be. The challenge will be to create a community that embraces its regional identity and acknowledges that local success benefits the entire Valley.

At the end of the Blueprint development process, the Coachella Valley will have – for the first time – a comprehensive regional strategy to unite local governments and constituencies behind a forward-thinking action plan for positive community and economic change. It will not be implemented wholly by any one organization or entity, but rather will benefit from a comprehensive regional action plan to bring the strategy's recommendations to fruition.

Indeed, the implementation of the strategy will bring together regional stakeholders in new and different ways to partner on programs and efforts designed to enable the Coachella Valley to prosper.

Join us and be part of the movement to frame the future we all want for the Coachella Valley!



PAVING THE WAY FOR THE ROAD AHEAD.

Regional partnerships presenting
the Coachella Valley as a business
responsive quality destination with
a coveted resort lifestyle.



**Coachella Valley
Economic Partnership**
*Helping Innovative Companies
Expand/Relocate to the Coachella Valley.*

Coachella Valley Economic Partnership

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